Strategy 2.4: Alignment with Key Instructional Deadlines and Activities

SGO Integration Tool

This resource is intended for collaborative teams to reflect and assess opportunities for SGO integration at your school and can be used as the basis for one or several team meeting discussions. The tool is organized according to the five steps of the SGO process. Each bullet represents a set of questions (and suggestions) that could serve as the focus of one discussion or one meeting, or could be stretched out as a line of inquiry over the course of an entire school year. A collaborative team might use this resource in one of two ways.

1. Focus on one step of the SGO process that has been particularly challenging and prioritize alignment and integration opportunities for that particular SGO step; or
2. Choose one priority opportunity for each SGO step and seek alignment and integration across the entire academic year and entire SGO process.

In either scenario, the purpose is to bring classroom initiatives together and make instructional efforts more effective, while making SGOs support teacher practice and student achievement.

Step 1: Choose or Develop High-Quality Assessments Aligned to Standards

Questions:
1. How can your team structure support the process of selecting high-quality assessments?
2. What role do teams play?
   - If teachers have selected or created their own assessments, how and when can teams review and critique each other's assessments?
3. What assessments do you already give and when?
   - When do you get the results?
   - Do results come in time for use in the SGO process?
   - If not, are assessment windows flexible?

Suggestions:
1. Discuss ways the team can take their knowledge of the summative assessments currently being used for SGOs and create short-term common formative assessments to track student growth.
2. Discuss common assessments and their advantages with the faculty and/or make the case to the faculty for common assessments. Teams can discuss the opportunities common assessments would potentially allow.
3. Discuss how/whether current assessments might support the SGO process (see Data Audit).

Step 2: Determine Students' Starting Points

Questions:
1. Are there team structures in place with schoolwide expectations (norms, protocols) for what data should be considered in establishing a student's starting points?
   - If not, how can you establish such expectations?
   - How can teams support the work of establishing expectations for data use? (i.e. teams could be directed to collaboratively agree on what data will be used to establish starting points by grade level).
2. Where are there opportunities to share information vertically? (i.e. last year's teacher sharing with this year's teacher)
   - Could this be a part of the process of establishing students' starting points each year?
   - Can teams be restructured to align vertically for a meeting in order to share information?
3. In what ways can this data collection and compilation be done in teams (grade level or content)?
4. Do teachers have access to all the data they need?
   - How can the administration support this work?
5. How and when can student's starting points, once compiled, be shared within teams for feedback and review?

Suggestions:
1. Discuss how data collection and compilation in teams would support teachers, making the work either more effective and/or more efficient.
2. Discuss what is needed for teachers to have access to the data they need and a timeline for action steps.
3. Discuss the ways in which peer review could strengthen SGO quality.

Step 3: Set Ambitious and Achievable SGOs

Questions:
1. Why should SGO development be done in teams (grade level or content)?
   - Do you need to change the calendar of team meetings (in order to align with the SGO process and deadlines)?
   - What support do teachers need to make this an option?
   - What steps should be taken first?
2. How can SGOs, once developed, be shared within teams for feedback and review? How will feedback be integrated?
   - What does this review process look like (in terms of norms, protocols)?
   - How can teams ensure that SGOs are ambitious and achievable?
3. How can team meetings be used to support the SGO process and provide regular check-ins on teachers' progress towards SGO attainment?

Suggestions:
1. Discuss who needs to weigh in on making decisions to align the calendar, team meetings, and agendas with the SGO timeline.
2. Discuss how teams can support SGOs through collaboration and move away from SGOs as an individual activity.
3. Discuss these big questions at the beginning of the year when you are establishing the agendas and the goals for the year.

Step 4: Track Progress and Refine Instruction

Questions:
1. How can teams provide a structure that tracks class progress toward SGO attainment and listen to teachers' short cycle instructional planning for peer review and feedback?
2. How will teachers use team meetings (and possible protocols) to seek help with particular challenges and difficult cases (e.g. students performing below grade level) or new strategies for teaching complex content?
3. When can teachers look at SGO case studies together and practice data-based instructional decision-making as a team?
   - When can teachers apply the same practices to their own classes and then share the results with the team?
4. When can teachers analyze their own class assessment data and share with their team?
   - When can teachers use their data to refine their classroom instructional plans and share with teams for feedback?
5. How can teachers weigh in on strategies to support SGO attainment in the team context, including instruction, remediation and differentiation, assessment, and enrichment?

Suggestions:
1. Discuss how team structures can support teachers and also help to monitor student progress.
2. Discuss what supports can be offered to teachers as a direct follow-up from team discussions (i.e. what differentiated resources can the school offer to teachers?).
3. Discuss what a realistic cycle of learning, classroom practice and reflection might look like.
4. Discuss a timeline for when data is available, the time needed for analysis, and instructional planning, including any need for check-ins along each step of the way.
5. Discuss these big questions at the beginning of the year when you are establishing the agendas and the goals for the year.

Step 5: Review Results and Score

Suggestions:
1. Ask teams to review SGO evidence together at the end of the year and engage in structured professional reflection (note: This might be more comfortable if the team/grade/department has used common assessments).
2. Ask teams to share any schoolwide implications they see from SGO results and make recommendations for professional development or needed instructional supports.

The Big Picture and Calendar Integration Activities

To be used in conjunction with one another, the Big Picture and Calendar Integration Activities [Word] [PDF] are meant to take information to identify initiatives and high priority items. From there you can begin mapping out when they occur, find connections among them, and find areas where items can be moved or integrated with one another, ultimately aligning them with each teacher's long-range student growth plan.

The **Big Picture** is a four-step process to assist in developing a more integrated system in which school leaders and collaborative teams step back to view the "big picture" of their schools' initiatives and mandates which require their time.

New Jersey's Standards for Professional Learning remind us that student achievement is best realized through a comprehensive, sustained, intensive, and collaborative approach to improving